

## Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

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DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1566

INFO ZMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 6438

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS YO

SUBJ: THE ZADAR GROUP (HORA)

1. IN THE COURSE OF RECENT COURTESY CALL ON MARKO BEZER, EXCOMM MEMBER OF THE PRESIDUUM OF THE LCC, CONSUL GEN KAISER ASKED FOR A BRIEFING ON THE ZADAR GROUP. KAISER SAID THAT WE HAD READ THE FEW SCATTERED PRESS ACCOUNTS IN "VJESNIK" AND "VUS" IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS, BUT THOUGHT IT DESIRABLE TO GET AN AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT IN ORDER BETTER TO UNDERSTAND AND INTERPRET THE ZADAR EPISODE.

2. BEZER SAID THERE WERE 15 MEN NOW ON TRIAL; ONE PERSON IS BEING TRIED IN ABSTENTIA. BEZER NOTED THAT TWO OF THOSE ON TRIAL HAD IN FACT BEEN PREVIOUSLY CONVICTED AND IMPRISONED FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS

NINE OTHERS HAD BEEN DETAINED BUT WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED, AS IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT THEY HAD ONLY HEARD ABOUT THE PLOTTINGS OF THE 15, BUT HAD NOT BEEN PART OF THE CONSPIRACY.

3. BEZER ASSERTED THAT THE ZADAR GROUP WAS AFFILIATED WITH THE CROATIAN REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERHOOD (CRB) IN THE FRG. ALTHOUGH THE ZADAR GROUP DID NOT CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF YUGOSLAVIA, BEZER SAID THAT YUGOSLAVIA HAD TO TREAT THE MATTER SERIOUSLY BECAUSE OF ITS PLANS FOR VIOLENCE

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AND TERRORISM. THEY PLANNED TO BLOW UP BRIDGES AND INDUSTRIAL

INSTALLATIONS AND ASSASSINATE LEADERS. HE MENTIONED THE LETTER BOMB, WHICH EXPLODED IN THE ZAGREB POST OFFICE AND SENSELESSLY MURDERED A WORKER NOV 15, WAS RELATED TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ZADAR GROUP.

4. THE COURT TRIAL IS LIKELY TO END IN ABOUT A MONTH, AND APPROPRIATE LEGAL JUDGEMENTS AND SENTENCES WILL BE IMPOSED. HE CLAIMED THAT THE GOVT DID NOT INTEND TO IMPOSE HARSH AND UNWARRANTED SEVERE PENALTIES. HE COMMENTED THAT, INTERESTINGLY, MANY CROATIANS WERE WRITING TO DEMAND SEVERE PUNISHMENT FOR THE CULPRITS. IN FACT, HE SAID, CROATIANS WERE URGING HARSHER PENALTIES THAN CITIZENS IN OTHER REPUBLICS OF YUGOSLAVIA. BUT HE REPEATED, LEGAL PROCEDURES WILL BE OBSERVED AND APPROPRIATE PENALTIES WILL BE HANDED DOWN.

5. BEZER ESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS IN CROATIA FOR THIS "USTASHI" GROUP AS MINIMAL. HE SAID SUPPORT CAME ONLY FROM RELATIVES; ANE EVEN THEY WERE NOT ASKING FOR THE RELEASE OF THE ACCUSED, BUT RATHER MODERATE PUNISHMENT. THE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES HAD DELIBERATELY TURNED OFF PRESS COVERAGE OF THE TRIAL. THEY FELT THAT THE PRESS ACCOUNTS WERE UNNECESSARILY SENSATIONALIZING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ZADAR GROUP.

6. BEZER SAID THE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES HAD BEEN COOPERATING WITH THE FRG POLICE AUTHORITIES, AND ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO THE YUGOSLAV "USTASHI" TYPES HAD BEEN APPREHENDED IN COLOGNE.

7. ASKED TO COMMENT ABOUT THE RELATIVE SERIOUSNESS OF THE THREAT TO YUGOSLAVIA COMING FROM THE "COMINFORMIST" GROUP APPREHENDED IN MONTENEGRO AND THIS ZADAR GROUP, MARKO BEZER SAID BOTH, OF COURSE, CONSITUTUTED THREATS. THE ZADAR GROUP, HOWEVER, MIGHT BE CONSIDERED MORE DANGEROUS IF ONLY BECAUSE IT PLANNED AND ADVOCATED VIOLENCE. BOTH GROUPS, HE SAID, SHARE THE COMMON GOAL OF SUBVERTING YUGOSLAVIA. THE "COMINFORMIST" GROUP WANTS TO RETIE YUGOSLAVIA TO THE EAST WHEREAS THE ZADAR GROUP WANTS TO DISMEMBER PRESENT-DAY YUGOSLAVIA AND CREATE A SEPARATE CROATIAN STATE. HE SAID, WHILE THE SPECIFIC GOALS ARE DIFFERENT, THEIR ULTIMATE AIM IS TO DESTROY THE PRESENTLY INDEPENDENT AND INTEGRAL YUGOSLAVIA. DESPITE THEIR IDOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES, BEZER SAID THERE WERE PERSONAL AND DIRECT CONTACTS IN WESTERN

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EUROPE BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE TWO GROUPS. THE ONLY NAMES HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY, WITHOUT IMPLYING, HOWEVER, THAT THESE TWO MEN WERE IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER, WERE DAPCEVIC, NOW RESIDING IN BRUSSELS, AND JELIC IN FRG.

8. IN SUM, WHAT BEZER SEEMED TO BE SAYING WAS THAT THE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES DO NOT WANT TO EXAGGERATE OR MAGNIFY THE SERIOUSNESS OF THESE THREATS, BUT NEVERTHELESS FEEL IT ESSENTIAL TO DEAL

SERIOUSLY WITH THEM -- AN OBLIGATION OF ALL SOVERIGN GOVERN-  
MENTS.  
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